

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 IO-10 AID-05 OES-03 EB-07

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /079 W

----- 105626

R 061123Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7887

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PK, IN

SUBJ: PAKISTAN PROPOSES TALKS WITH INDIA ON SELAL DAM

REF: ISLAMABAD 9547

SUMMARY: PAKISTAN HAS PROPOSED TO INDIA THAT INDUS BASIN COMMISSION DISCUSS QUESTION OF INDIA'S SELAL DAM IN ISLAMABAD DECEMBER 19-23. NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, IN SPIRITED DEBATE DECEMBER 4, DISCUSSED DAM NOW BEING CONSTRUCTED ON CHENAB RIVER IN INDIAN-HELD JAMMU. GOP CLAIMS PRESENT DAM DESIGN DOES NOT CONFORM TO CRITERIA LAID DOWN UNDER INDUS WATERS AGREEMENT. GOP MINISTER FOR FUEL, POWER AND NATURAL RESOURCES CALLED DAM CAUSE FOR ALARM BUT EXPRESSED HOPE THAT INDIA WILL RESPECT SPIRIT OF SIMLA ACCORD AND NOT INTERFERE WITH VITAL SECTOR OF PAK ECONOMY. MFA DIRECTOR FOR INDIA STATED THAT ESSENTIAL PROBLEM THAT OF POTENTIAL FOR DENIAL OF WATER TO PAKISTAN AND SAID THAT IF DAM HAS THAT POTENTIAL,

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IT IS OBJECTIONABLE UNDER TREATY. DIRECTOR SAID IF

AGREEMENT IS NOT REACHED DURING DECEMBER COMMISSION MEETING, INDUS AGREEMENT PROCEDURE FOR ARBITRATION WILL BE FOLLOWED. END SUMMARY.

1. PAKISTAN HAS PROPOSED TO INDIA THAT QUEST OF THE SELAL DAM BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF INDO-PAK INDUS BASIN COMMISSION WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO MEET IN ISLAMABAD FROM DECEMBER 19 TO 23. PAKS WILL ASK INDIANS TO MODIFY DESIGN OF DAM, NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION AT RIASI IN INDIAN-HELD JAMMU, TO CONFORM WITH WHAT PAKS CLAIM ARE PROVISIONS OF INDUS WATERS AGREEMENT.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS, GOP MINISTER FOR FUEL, POWER AND NATURAL RESOURCES YUSUF KHATTAK REVEALED PAK PROPOSAL TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DECEMBER 4 IN COURSE OF DEBATE ON SUBJECT WHICH WAS RAISED IN ASSEMBLY BY MNA AHMED RAZA KASURI (TEHRIK-I-ISTIQLAL). KASURI HAD CHARGED THAT THE PROPOSED DIVERSION OF CHANAB RIVER WATERS BY THE SELAL DAM WOULD TURN THE SIALKOT, SHEIKHAPURA AND GUJRANWALA AREAS INTO DESERT.

3. KHATTAK TOLD ASSEMBLY THAT INDIANS HAD INFORMED PAKS IN 1970 OF THEIR DECISION TO BUILD HYDRO-ELECTRIC DAM. INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY INDIA WAS VERY SKETCHY, KHATTAK SAID, BUT WHEN PAKISTAN ASKED FOR MORE INFORMATION, WHICH PAKS SAY THEY ARE ENTITLED TO UNDER INDUS WATERS TREATY, INDIANS WERE NOT FORTHCOMING. HOWEVER, MINISTER STATED, EVEN ON BASIS OF INFORMATION PROVIDED, IT WAS CLEAR THAT DAM DESIGN WOULD NOT CONFORM TO CRITERIA LAID DOWN UNDER TREATY. IN ADDITION, PAKS CLAIM THAT WHEN THEIR DELEGATE TO COMMISSION, HABIB UL RAHMAN, AND OTHER EXPERTS VISITED SITE IN SEPTEMBER, 1974, INDIANS WERE UNCOOPERATIVE, THUS SHARPENING THEIR SUSPICIONS.

4. NO HARM WOULD BE DONE TO PAKISAN IF INDIA REVISED DESIGNS OF PROJECT IN ACCORDANCE WITH TREATY CRITERIA, KHATTAK IS REPORTED AS SAYING. SELAL DAM HAS GIVEN PAKISTAN CAUSE FOR ALARM AND COUNTRY IS DEEPLY WORRIED ABOUT IT, HE SAID, BUT HE CONTINUED WITH HOPE THAT INDIA WOULD RESPECT SPIRIT OF SIMLA ACCORD AND DID NOT ATTEMPT TO CREATE DIFFICULTIES IN VITAL SECTOR OF PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY.

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5. MINISTER OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND PROVINCIAL COORDINATION PIRZADA ALSO ADDRESSED ISSUE, SAYING THAT WHILE GOVERNMENT WAS COGNIZANT OF IMPORTANCE OF ISSUE, PAKISTAN SHOULD NOT BE UNDULY ALARMED AT THIS POINT. HOWEVER, PIRZADA REMARKED, IF INDIA CREATED CONSIDERABLE WATER STORAGE CAPABILITY IN DAM, THIS WOULD BE A TREATY VIOLATION.

6. DEBATE ON SUBJECT WAS SPIRITED. RAZA KASURI, CALLING

IRRIGATION WATERS "COUNTRY'S LIFELINE", CLAIMED THAT INDIA WAS TRYING TO "STRANGULATE PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY" BY BUILDING DAM. MNA GHULAM NABI CHAUDHRY (PAKISTA PEOPLES' PARTY) CALLED SELAL DAM CLEAR VIOLATION OF INDUS TREATY, UNDER WHICH, HE ASSERTED, INDIA WAS ENTITLED TO STORE NOT MORE THAN 60,000 ACRE FEET OF CHENAB'S WATERS BUT IN FACT WAS PLANNING TO STORE 230,000 ACRE FEET. CHAUDHRY MUMTAZ ALI (PPP) DEMANDED THAT MATTER BE TAKEN UP AT HIGHER LEVEL THAN INDUS BASIS JOINT COMMISSION. DESCRIBING CHENAB AS PAKISTAN'S JUGLAR VEIN, MUMTAZ SAID IT SHOULD BE MADE CLEAR TO INDIA THAT PAKISTAN WAS VERY SENSITIVE IN REGARD TO RIVER.

7. EMBOFF DISCUSSED SUBJECT DECEMBER 5 WITH MFA DIRECTOR FOR INDIA, ZAFAR HILALY. HILALY DESCRIBED AS ESSENTIAL PROBLEM THAT OF POTENTIAL FOR DENIAL OF WATER TO PAKISTAN, ESPECIALLY IN PERIODS OF LOW WATER FLOW. UNDER TREATY, HE SAID, FLOW NOT TO BE INTERFERED WITH. IF WORKS UNDER CONSTRUCTION DO NOT INTERFERE WITH FLOW, THEN PAKISTAN HAS NO VALID OBJECTION. THUS DAM IS NOT IN ITSELF TOTALLY OBJECTIONABLE. HOWEVER, HE STRESSED, IF IT HAS EVEN POTENTIAL OF DEPRIVING PAKISTAN OF WATER, THEN IS OBJECTIONABLE UNDER AGREEMENT.

8. HILALY NOTED THAT IF AGREEMENT COULD NOT BE REACHED ON DAM DESIGN DURING DECEMBER COMMISSION MEETING, THEN, UNDER TREATY, A NEUTRAL EXPERT, MUTUALLY AGREED UPON, COULD BE NAMED TO ATTEMPT SETTLE DISPUTE. IF HE COULD NOT EFFECT A SETTLEMENT, THEN WORLD BANK WOULD BE ASKED TO NAME AN ARBITRATOR, OR IF BOTH SIDES WISHED, EACH COULD NAME AN ADDITIONAL MAN, CREATING A THREE-MAN PANEL TO SETTLE PROBLEM.

9. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT RAZA KASURI, WHOSE REMARKS INCLUDED DEMAND THAT NATION PREPARE FOR WAR OVER ISSUE, IS WELL-KNOWN HOTHEAD, MUCH GIVEN TO HYPERBOLE. HIS PARTY HAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ONLY TWO SEATS IN ASSEMBLY.
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Message Attributes

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